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LETTERS TO THE EDITOR

FROM A SOLDIER'S FATHER

SIR,—*Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.*

You may be interested in hearing of how some of our young men were treated who believed the above sentiment and freely offered their lives for their country on the battlefields of France in 1918. My youngest son was a student at Yale College when the war broke out in 1914. In 1915, with 700 other fellow-students, he enlisted in the Yale Battalion. In 1916 they were sworn into the U. S. Army as privates and sent to camp at Tobyhanna, Pa., where they made four batteries of the 10th Field Artillery, under command of Colonel Danford. In September, 1916, they were mustered out and returned to Yale, where their artillery instruction was continued during the winter of 1916-17, under Colonel Danford, Captain Moretti and Captain Potter. Captain Potter was detailed to teach them to ride. They were put through the same riding drill as the West Point cadets. In the spring of 1917 they were ready to go to the School of Fire at Fort Sill, Okla., and Colonel Danford strongly urged and expected that they be sent there for three months' training, when they would be ready for their commissions as artillery officers, which we so sorely needed at this time. Instead of doing this they were ordered by the Secretary of War to apply for admission to the training camp nearest to their homes. Even then each man had to get three letters of recommendation before he was allowed to enter these camps.

When I heard of this I telegraphed to the Secretary of War asking whether it was still too late to change this order, as three months at the Fort Sill School of Fire would fit these 700 men for artillery commissions. In ten days I had a telegram from the Adjutant General of the army, saying the Secretary of War had turned my telegram over to him for answer—that while the Yale Battalion was a fine body of men and would no doubt make fine soldiers, it would not do to have a corps d'élite in the army. Of course, this was an evasive answer, as they would not have been a corps after getting their commissions any more than a class of West Point is a corps after graduation. However, my son was sent to the Officers' Training Camp at Fort Niagara in May, 1917; received his commission as 2d Lieutenant, Field Artillery, U. S. R., on August 14, 1917, and was one of ten out of his battery sent directly to France, where he was ordered to Battery F, 7th U. S. Field Artillery, 1st Division of the A. E. F.

This division was on the Lorraine front until April, 1918, when

they were ordered to the front between Cantigny and Amiens. In May they took Cantigny and held it against numerous counter-attacks by the Boche. They made many raids in this sector and saw real fighting. In one of these raids my son carried a wounded man out of No Man's Land under fire and was recommended for a citation. In July they were ordered to rest billets, having been under intensive fire for three months, but before reaching them were turned to the line south of Soissons to take part in the big drive which started on July 17 and was the beginning of the defeat of the Germans. My boy had many hair-breadth escapes in these battles, was gassed, but not wounded. He filled every battery position. When the division was relieved he had not had his uniform nor his boots off for a month, and weighed only 130 pounds. His weight is 170 now. When his division was ordered to St. Mihiel he and other Yale Reserve officers were ordered back, some to teach at the artillery school at Saumur. He was ordered to the classification camp at St. Aignan, where he was when the armistice was signed. He was then sent to Blois and put on waiting orders, with no duties. He lost all his baggage in April and had to buy a new outfit. On December 1 he learned of its location, at a town about forty miles from Blois. The Colonel in command at Blois refused to let him have a day off in which to get it. His reason was that orders might arrive for him. He refused to let him go to St. Aignan for his Christmas packages. His baggage is still in France. He refused him twenty-four hours' leave to go to a Yale dinner in Paris. He refused him twenty-four hours' leave to say good-bye to his French friends at Nice and St. Georges. In fact, this Colonel, who was a Major when Pershing was a Captain, was a real old-style martinet, such as we read about in Maryatt.

On Christmas morning my son was discharged from the army and ordered to leave that night for Brest, to take transport for the United States. Although discharged in France he was not paid off in France. At Brest he had to wait ten days for a transport, paying his own expenses. He had to borrow money from the Red Cross. On the transport he had to pay for his meals—\$14. The Colonel in charge of the ship refused to sign his subsistence checks, saying, "you are no longer in the army and therefore are not entitled to subsistence." He received his pay after reaching New York.

His case is only one of hundreds. To say that these men are sore over their treatment is putting it mildly. One officer who had enlisted in Paris, and had received the Croix de Guerre and three citation stars, was sent to New York, although he demanded to be returned to the place of his enlistment. These men are all returned as "casuals." They have no division, no regiment, no company. My son, after sixteen months on the front and a year on the firing line, after having been recommended for a citation and promotion, is discharged in a foreign country without pay and has to borrow money to get home. He feels he has been kicked out of the army, as though he had never done anything creditable. He wanted to remain in France, but it was not allowed. Although discharged there, and as far as I can see, at once becoming a private citizen, he and others were sent to Brest in charge of an officer!

Leaving here in August, 1917, full of enthusiasm and eagerness to

serve their country in the army in France, they return disheartened and with anything but love of country in their hearts. Something is radically wrong in the treatment of these men. We could not raise a volunteer army of any size today. I doubt whether an army could be raised today by conscription without serious opposition. As for our present Administration, it is teaching that the Government will support the people. The idea that the people must support the Government does not seem to have any place in the minds of the Socialists, labor unions and I. W. W.

Dulce et decorum est pro patria mori.

Pardon my encroaching on your time, but I know you will hear much about the complaints of returning soldiers, and I thought you might be interested in the experience of one of them.

Easton, Pa.

S. H. CHAUVENET.

ROOSEVELT AND JOHN BURROUGHS

SIR.—What a lovable and wonderful figure is John Burroughs! With an aged body crowned by time-bleached hair, he faces the world with a smile and a calm young soul as fresh as the snow upon bowed chrysanthemums in late November. In the flower of his years he urges us, who have not achieved the outlook his comprehension has attained, to accept the Universe, telling us that life is sweet despite the bitter seed we often bite into in our enjoyment of the mellow fruit. "The good would have no tang, no edge, no cutting quality, without evil to oppose it."

He has said: "The voyage is not all calm and sunshine, but it is safe * * *;" that "power waits upon him who earns it * * *." And I recall the word of another naturalist whose strong voice of resonant courage was ever raised to point the way of true happiness: "The joy of living is his who has the heart to demand it." And it seems that the source of this last quotation, Theodore Roosevelt, has been overlooked in one essential aspect—that is, literary ability. In the tremendousness of his political career the books into which he put himself, where you find the real man, have not been noted with the degree of prominence that their eloquence and scholarship deserve.

The spirit of adventure was wonderfully developed in Theodore Roosevelt. It seemed to be a part of his innermost being, this desire for new plains to roam on, new men and stars and forests and beasts to see. He loved to go over untrodden ground, revelling in the unfolding of virgin landscapes, experiencing the thrill of an explorer mounting the crest of a hill to gaze into a fresh land his pioneer spirit had brought out of the unknown, the joy without the disappointment which Moses must have felt when he saw deep into the heart of Caanan. The long days in the saddle; the dangerous trailing of fierce animals; the deep forests spreading welcome shade over wide floors of fern, inviting one to tent and rest—these were clear joys to him. And this wish for the uninhabited, uncivilized reaches, for great plains and extended vistas of hills was not an impression upon his mind of a mere *wanderlust* tendency; it was the logical need of his being for undefiled Nature, the irrepressible longing of his mind for an environment in which his